

NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 25th January 1879.

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Number of copies issued.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.
BENGALI.				
<i>Monthly.</i>				
1	"Bhārat Shramajīvi"	Barāhanagar ...	4,000	
2	"Rājshāhye Sambād"	Rājshāhye ...	.....
3	"Grāmvartā Prakāshikā"	Comercolly ...	200	
4	"Arya Pratibhā"	Bhavanīpore ...	.....
5	"Suhrid"	Calcutta ...	.....
<i>Bi-monthly.</i>				
6	"Cālnā Prakāsh"	Cālnā ...	.....
7	"Hindu Lalanā"	Nawābgunge, Barrack-pore.	.....
8	"Sahayogī"	Bhavanīpore, Calcutta	.....
<i>Weekly.</i>				
9	"Banga Hitaishī"	Bhavanīpore, Calcutta	.....
10	"Bhārat Mihir"	Mymensingh ...	658	16th January 1879.
11	"Bhārat Sanskāra"	Harinābhi ...	.....
12	"Bengal Advertiser"	Ditto ...	.....
13	"Bishva Dūt"	Tāliganj, Calcutta	.....
14	"Bardwān Prachārikā"	Bardwān ...	165	
15	"Bardwān Sanjīvanī"	Ditto ...	.....	21st ditto.
16	"Dacca Prakāsh"	Dacca ...	400	12th and 19th January 1879.
17	"Education Gazette"	Hooghly ...	1,168	17th January 1879.
18	"Grāmvartā Prakāshikā"	Comercolly ...	200	18th ditto.
19	"Hindu Hitaishini"	Dacca ...	300	18th ditto.
20	"Hindu Ranjika"	Beauleah, Rājshāhye...	200	15th ditto.
21	"Murshidābād Pratinidhi"	Berhampore ...	.....	17th ditto.
22	"Pratikār"	Ditto ...	235	17th ditto.
23	"Rangpore Dik Prakāsh"	Kākinī, Rangpore ...	250	9th and 16th January 1879.
24	"Sādhārani"	Chinsurah ...	516	19th January 1879.
25	"Sahachara"	Calcutta ...	.....	20th ditto.
26	"Sambād Bhāskar"	Ditto ...	.....
27	"Sanjīvanī"	Mymensingh ...	.....	14th ditto.
28	"Sulabha Samāchār"	Calcutta ...	5,500	18th ditto.
29	"Soma Prakāsh"	Bhavanīpore ...	700	20th ditto.
<i>Bi-weekly.</i>				
30	"Banga Mitra"	Calcutta ...	4,000	
<i>Tri-weekly.</i>				
31	"Samāchāra Sudhābarshana"	Calcutta ...	.....
<i>Daily.</i>				
32	"Sambād Prabhākar"	Calcutta ...	550	16th to 18th January 1879.
33	"Sambād Pūrnachandrodaya"	Ditto ...	.....	16th to 22nd ditto.
34	"Samāchār Chandrikā"	Ditto ...	625	14th to 22nd ditto.
35	"Banga Vidyā Prakāshikā"	Ditto ...	.....
36	"Arya Mihir"	Ditto ...	.....
ENGLISH AND BENGALI.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
37	"Howrah Hitakari"	Bethar, Howrah ...	300	
38	"Murshidābād Patrikā"	Berhampore ...	.....	17th January 1879.
39	"Barisāl Vartābāha"	Barisāl ...	300	
ENGLISH AND URDU.				
40	"Urdu Guide"	Calcutta ...	400	18th ditto.
URDU.				
<i>Bi-monthly.</i>				
41	"Akhhār-ul-Akhiār"	Mazufferpore ...	.....
HINDI.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
42	"Behār Bandhu"	Bankipore, Patna ...	509	22nd ditto.
43	"Bhārat Mitra"	Calcutta ...	.....	16th ditto.
PERSIAN.				
44	"Jām-Jahān-numā"	Ditto ...	250	

POLITICAL.

BARDWAN SANJIVANI,
January 21st, 1879.

THE *Burdwan Sanjivani* of the 21st January, observes that the "scientific rectification of the frontier" cannot have any other meaning than annexation.

The Afghan war.

So that it is almost certain that Afghanistan will at no distant date form part of the British Empire. If it were not so, with the flight of Shere Ali there would be an end of the war; for in the Lahore Proclamation Lord Lytton assured the people of Afghanistan that the British Government had no cause of offence against them. The writer then shows that even if Afghanistan be annexed, there will be no gain to the British Government. The impracticable nature of the country, the savage and unruly character of its people, and the need of permanently stationing a large body of troops in the newly-acquired territory for maintaining the peace will involve considerable expense and trouble. The only gain will be the triumph of Lord Beaconsfield, at the expense of the Indian treasury and a large number of human lives. Nor is the conquest of Afghanistan called for by any fear of a Russian invasion, Lord Beaconsfield having himself assured us of there being no ground for it.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.

DACCA PRAKASHA,
January 12th, 1879.

2. The *Dacca Prakash*, of the 12th January, thus notices the transfer of Mr. Garrett, the Judge of Dacca, to Noakholly:—Mr. Garrett is exceedingly gentle

Mr. Garrett.

and courteous, and has nothing *sahebi* about him. As a judicial officer, he is thoroughly impartial. Being fond of seclusion and ease, he does not much mix in the society of Europeans or his brother civilians. We have known but few Europeans possessed of such genial courtesy.

HINDU RANJIKÁ,
January 15th, 1879.

3. The *Hindu Ranjika*, of the 15th January, thus delivers itself on the question of the cost of the Afghan war:—

The cost of the Afghan war.

Is England not able to bear the cost of this war? We can tell Government how means for this purpose may be obtained, but it rests with them to accept or reject our counsel. Let there be a reduction of all extravagant expenditure. This will not only furnish funds for carrying on the war; the annually increasing surplus which will result will considerably relieve the miseries of the people. Common sense tells us that in this Afghan war Government is without any adequate cause making a waste of money. Considerable savings might be effected if only the high salaries of its civilian officers, which almost drain the Indian Exchequer, could be reduced. May not competent men be obtained on a lower scale of pay?

BHARAT MIHIR,
January 16th, 1879.

4. In an article headed "Practical education and the views of the Lieutenant-Governor," the *Bhārat Mihir*, of the 16th January, makes the following observations:—Sir Ashley Eden has fully realized

Technical education and Sir A. Eden.

the responsibility which rests upon all Governors to seek the advancement of the people under their charge and remove their wants and grievances. His desire to confer the superior appointments in the public service on natives, and to supply our long-standing wants, makes us willing to forget his unkind treatment of the Native Press. It is now many days that His Honor referred to the subject of practical education for natives on the occasion of distribution of prizes at the Oriental Seminary at Calcutta. The time, it seems, has now come for doing something in this direction for native youths. We are gratified to observe this consistency of purpose in Sir Ashley Eden, a ruler whose chief merit is that he does not merely make speeches. In most cases, his speeches do but herald his acts. The

proposal to purchase the Bishop's College building and convert it into a school of practical instruction will doubtless be beneficial. At present we are obliged to depend on Europe for the supply of the most common articles in use. Indigenous manufacture cannot compete with that conducted on scientific principles. Even our pins must be imported from England. Should the proposed school be an accomplished fact, it will prove a great boon to the country. The *Statesman* asks the Director of Public Instruction to set up an agricultural college in this connection; but may we expect so much?

5. Adverting to the eulogistic terms in which Mr. Mackenzie referred to the services of the Moonsifs of Bengal, the same paper observes that the time has now come when the enormously high salaries which obtain in this country should be reduced. Whether in point of learning, moral character, or ability, the native Judges are not inferior to the European Judges. What objection could there be to appointing the former on a thousand instead of the latter on twice as much? If all the Judgeships and the Magistracies in the country were thrown into two grades of Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 1,500 respectively, and most of the appointments conferred on natives, the measure, while conducing to economy, would improve the administration of justice and enable Government to fulfil its duty to the people. The public service in no other country is so highly paid as it is in India. From the Governor-General down to the Assistant Magistrate the salaries drawn by the European officers are enough to make one's blood cold in his veins. By the creation of the Sub-Deputy Collectorship, and thus indirectly adding one more grade to the class of Deputy Magistrates, the Government of Sir George Campbell but in a manner reduced the already small salary allowed to these officers. The consequence of this measure has been that in many cases men of imperfect or no education have found admission into this last grade, and are bringing disgrace on the executive service. As in the judicial, so in the subordinate executive service, it behoves Sir Ashley Eden to rule that the candidates must be possessed of University degrees. There will not be any real improvement in this department of the administration so long as the judicial and executive services are not placed on the same footing.

BHARAT MIHIR,
January 16th, 1879.

6. The same paper writes as follows in an article headed "Oppression in connection with the license tax":—On the strength of the assurance that the proceeds of the tax should only be expended for purposes of famine relief, the opposition to the license tax was not so decided as it was in the case of the income tax. Now that a portion, if not the whole, of the cost of the Cabul war is to be thrown upon the Indian Exchequer, it is not difficult to predict to what purposes the Famine Insurance Fund will be diverted. We, however, do not believe that Government will so readily break its promise. Without, however, attempting to forecast what may come in the future, the way in which the license tax is being assessed and levied has really frightened and pained us. From all sides complaints reach us regarding the oppressions committed in this connection. Even the petty vendors of edible herbs, vegetables, and other necessary articles of food, who hawk about their goods from door to door, have not escaped assessment. We may here enumerate the leading defects of the License Tax Act. These are—(1). The Act, while it lightly touches the pockets of the wealthy merchants and mahajuns, spends all its force upon the large number of petty traders and shopkeepers with small capitals. (2). The Collector's are empowered to hear objections against the assessments. Now, this is a provision we have long protested against; but since

BHARAT MIHIR.

Government has adopted it, who is competent to point out its error? It is almost a superhuman task to attempt to make Government *see*. We do not see why a measure, which would benefit the many at the expense of a few, while leaving other interests *intact*, should not be accepted and acted upon. What Government has once put on paper is indeed *unalterable*; but does it not behove them to see whether the assessments that are being made under the license tax are proper and equitable? The information at our disposal enables us to state that the poor tradesmen are being exceedingly harassed by this impost. Considering that the well-being of these men depends in a great measure on the experience and impartiality which the license tax collectors may bring to bear upon their work, it is exceedingly desirable that only honest and intelligent men should be appointed as such. But it is to be regretted that this is not the case in a great many places. The mode of assessment, which we describe below, does not commend itself to our minds. The collector proceeds to a village and summons the chowkeedars of the adjacent villages. From them information is obtained regarding the condition of the inhabitants. It is well known from what class of people these rural functionaries are generally selected. The summoning by a license tax officer affords them the best opportunity for rendering a good office or gratifying a spite. A man with an yearly income of Rs. 30 is described as possessed of Rs. 200, while one possessed of that amount gets credit for a fourth of the sum. There are tax-collectors who make inquiries of everybody that comes in their way. Nor are instances of corruption uncommon. It behoves Government to inquire.

BHARAT MIHIR,
January 16th, 1879.

7. The *Bhārat Mihir* thus comments on the Rent Bill:—At the last sitting of the Bengal Council, the Rent Bill was referred to a Select Committee, at whose

The Rent Bill.

hands it will receive, it may be expected, many amendments. A measure of so much importance, however, instead of being entrusted solely to a single committee, should be referred to the public, and the opinion of the country invited thereon. We think, we remember, that in the time of Sir George Campbell, copies of a Bill for the appointment of managers for undivided joint estates were thus circulated among District Magistrates for the purpose of ascertaining the opinion of the people regarding the measure. We would ask Government to do the same in the present case. After stating the objects and reasons of the Bill, the editor remarks:—The measure has been introduced after much deliberation and thought. Sir Ashley Eden is not ignorant of the condition of landlords and tenants in this country; and considering that almost all parties have felt the need of such a piece of legislation, it is but meet that it should be passed in his time. We, too, consider that a change of the present dilatory procedure regarding the execution of decrees is desirable; but, we confess, it is not easy to hit upon any change by which, while all interests should remain *intact*, the tenant shall be protected from harassment by constant litigation. Bengal is wholly an agricultural country, and its prosperity or adversity is closely bound up with the condition of its land. And so it happens, that of all laws enacted here, a rent law possesses the highest importance for Bengal. We would therefore advise Government to enforce this law with great caution and no haste. The Select Committee has been allowed only six weeks' time, but this is not enough. There may be Acts which read very well on paper and in the statute-book, or are made to appear attractive in speeches; but which, nevertheless, when in operation, discharge their venom through the different strata of society; and it is for this reason that we are obliged to protest against certain portions of the present Bill. It is fortunate that the power to decide rent suits has been continued

to the Moonsifs. We may well guess from the summary character of the Bill the hardship which, in many cases, would result to the tenants, if jurisdiction in such suits were vested in the Collectors. Referring to the sections relating to occupancy holdings, the writer observes:—We confess this part of the Bill has greatly disheartened us; and, we fear, that should this be passed into law, nothing short of a revolution will take place in the relations between landlords and tenants. We shall, however, come to this part of the subject presently, and shall now offer a few remarks on the chief object for which the Bill has been framed, viz., to facilitate the realization of rents. As explained by Mr. Mackenzie, the summary procedure will only be adopted when the rates are undisputed. Now, we do not understand what is here meant by the expression “undisputed rates.” There are but few suits instituted against tenants where there is no dispute, and even if there be some delay in paying the rent, the forbearance of the zemindar makes him unwilling to go to law. The tenant, too, in cases where there is no dispute, does not refuse to pay the rent. We do not, therefore, see what Mr. Mackenzie means. In cases of dispute, on the contrary, as soon as the zemindar has instituted the suit, the tenant will object to the rate. Will not the present law be applicable in such suits? Provision is made in the Bill for awarding a decree, if the landlord should be able to prove that the rent had actually been paid at the rate claimed during the last three years. Now, let us see, what sort of proof the zemindar will have to produce. We have not the least faith in the correctness of the records kept by most of the zemindars. It is just possible that the *sherista* of some of the most wealthy of the class do not contain any false records; but there is a class of petty talookdars, who do not feel the least scruple in forging *chitties* and *jama-wasil-baki* papers. Nor is it difficult for this class of men to produce false witnesses. In Bengal, the evidence of a Mussulman may be bought for eight annas; and the zemindars have no lack of Mahomedan tenants. Registered *kabooliyats*, indeed, can be more relied upon; but the instances are rare in which registered *kabooliyats* are taken from the ryots. Mr. Mackenzie has himself commented on the unprincipled character of the process-serving peons. Through their means unscrupulous landlords will be able easily to ruin the tenant. It appears from the Bill that the mere filing of the plaint by the landlord will be enough to have his claim admitted, and that for the satisfaction of the court and for the support of the claim, the production of a *kabooliyat* or two pages of *jama-wasil-baki* papers will be all that is wanted. Now, we consider this to be very hard, and fear that in many cases it will have a very bad effect. The provisions regarding the deposit of rent claimed are perfect, and will remove the tardiness which now attends the execution of decrees, while by their means the landlords will be prevented from putting their tenants to needless harassment. The history of the law of landlord and tenant has become as interesting as a romance. The favour of the Legislature is now conferred on the tenant, again on the landlord. Regulations 7 and 5 were exceedingly hostile to the tenant; Act X of 1859 became equally troublesome to the landlord, for the sufferings of the ryot gave it birth. Sir Ashley Eden has desired to frame a measure which should avoid the two extremes and be a compromise between the two. The provisions he has enacted for the realization of the rents, although they are rigorous, are not, nevertheless, revolutionary; and their efficiency can only be tested when put in operation. But the way in which His Honor would convert the tenants into talookdars will be productive of injurious consequences by diminishing the value of rights in land.

BHARAT MIHIR,
January 16th, 1879.

8. The same paper writes as follows:—Rumours of an income tax have sent a chill through our hearts. We may, however, accept it as a lesser evil, if it be

An Income Tax.

substituted for the license tax, and thus relieve the pressure on the poor. But there will be no end of hardship if in these hard times it comes as an additional burden. The Afghan war will work such a havoc in the country, that it will take some time to recover from its effects. The impoverished people cannot bear any more. Without money, without food, and without the means of earning a livelihood, how will they submit to further taxation?

BHARAT MIHIR.

9. In an inauspicious hour has Lord Lytton enacted the two obnoxious laws which have cast a deep stain on the annals of the English nation. The two

The Arms' Act.

measures have equally exceeded the limits that ought to exist between the conquerors and the conquered and a dominant and subject people. For this will history paint in enduring black the period of his administration. A perusal of the rules under the Arms' Act has filled our hearts with shame, sorrow, and dejection. Repeatedly do we remember the sad state of our own subjection. That we are a subject-people, subject to a foreign rule, Lord Lytton's Arms' Act points out in no unmistakeable language.

MURSHIDABAD
PATRIKA,
January 17th, 1879.

10. The *Murshidabad Patriká*, of the 17th January, notices the hardship occasioned by the inequitable assessments made under the License Tax Act.

The License Tax.

Even people earning a mere pittance by selling the milk of their one or two kine, or the dung-cakes used as fuel, have got notices of assessment. There is, indeed, provision for appeals, but it is a mistake to prefer any, for they are, as a rule, dismissed. It would go a great way to mitigate the rigours of the measure, if the grounds on which they had been assessed were explained to the people held liable to the impost.

HINDU HITASHINI,
January 18th, 1879.

11. In a long article, the *Hindu Hitaishini*, of the 18th January, protests against a decision of the High Court, in which that court is said to have ruled that the

Is the officer of a Bank a public servant.

officer of a Bank, such as that of one of the branches of the Bengal Bank, is not a public servant, and therefore not punishable for receiving an illegal gratification. Considering that payments on account of Government, such as the instalments of the revenue, are made through the agency of these branch Banks, and that these officers may, as one actually did in the present case, make undue demands, the authorities should devise some means for protecting the public from such annoyances.

GRAMVARTA
PRAKASHIKA,
January 18th, 1879.

12. The *Grámvartá Prakáshiká* having proposed to publish a series of articles on "Tenant right in Bengal," offers his second instalment in his issue of the 18th

Tenant right.

January. He shows that, unlike the people of any other country, the natives of India have all a homestead, a plot of land on which stands the dwelling-house, and a few beeghas of land for growing the food of the family. So that the people, whatever may be their particular avocation in life, are all in a manner agriculturists, and depend on land for their food. The same paper asks Government not to pass the Rent Bill in haste, and to give it the widest publicity possible. Means should be used for making known its contents to the inhabitants of villages whom it most nearly concerns, but who are remarkably ignorant of such matters.

DACCA PRAKASH,
January 19th, 1879.

13. The *Dacca Prakash*, of the 19th January, after dwelling on the state of relations existing between landlords and tenants at the present time, proceeds to comment on the Rent Bill. He writes:—Much attention has not indeed been

The Rent Bill.

paid in the present Bill to the subject of enhancement of rent, still the chief object has been to provide the zemindars facilities for the realization of rents, while the rights of the tenant have also received a careful treatment. Although we are not prepared at this moment to express unreservedly our opinion on the matter, we can, nevertheless, affirm that, should this Bill be passed into law, it will, by conferring upon the tenant a permanent right in the land, while making it easier for the landlords to realize their dues, convert them into lifeless things and reduce them to the position of mere rent-collectors. There cannot be any doubt that, so far as the collection of rents is concerned, the zemindars will be greatly benefited by this measure. We have, however, objections to the provision made in the Bill for enabling tenants to transfer their occupancy rights. What difference would there be between the privilege which it is now sought to be conferred upon them and the proprietary right which the landlords have in the land? We do not see what rights the latter will have left them, if the tenants are thus at liberty to transfer their occupancy holdings. The position is not improved by the consideration that, according to the present Bill, such holdings can only be transferred to cultivating tenants; for it is certain that as soon as the ryot acquires this right, the zemindar will lose the very essence of his right. Now, suppose that the landed property of a zemindar, every tenant on which has acquired this right, is for sale, will it fetch such a high price as it would do at present? Will not *this arrangement*, therefore, seriously affect the price of zemindarees and talookdarees? It is strange that the person who has been from time immemorial recognized and designated as the "proprietor" of the land should be debarred from using it in any way he pleases in favour of him who has only held it from the former. Mr. Mackenzie refers to the indifference of the landlords to improve the land, or undertake any great works of public utility for the benefit of their tenants, who have to do this themselves. It is therefore argued that privilege of transferring for a consideration these occupancy holdings will place increased resources at their disposal for carrying out this purpose. We do not perceive the force of this reasoning. If men of education and experience, as many among the class of landlords undoubtedly are, are not willing to improve their land, even knowing that such improvements cannot but be profitable investments to them, is it possible that an ignorant and impoverished tenantry will have the inclination and ability to undertake such works the moment they acquire the right of transferring their occupancy holdings? There are not a few tenants who have long enjoyed *mourusi* rights; but who among them has ever sunk wells, or excavated canals for improving the agriculture? Have even petty talookdars done this? The fact is, such works can only be constructed at considerable expense, which is beyond the means of the tenantry. Those of Backergunge, Noakholly, and Chittagong are, indeed, somewhat better off; but this improvement in their condition is not due to their own exertions, but to natural causes which have favoured their agricultural operations. Even the little that is being done by the landlords towards the improvement of the land, although it may be deemed inadequate, is likely to diminish if the ryots are vested with an abiding right in the land. The zemindars are not only undertaking works for the improvement of the land, but doing other expensive works of public utility, such as the founding of schools and dispensaries, the construction of roads and *gháts*, and the excavation of tanks. If they are now to be rendered powerless, and their income becomes reduced, while others become enriched at their expense, what likelihood is there of their being willing and able to perform such noble works of public utility?

SAHACHARA,
January 20th, 1879.

14. The *Sahachar*, of the 20th January, thus delivers itself on the return to duty of Sir John Strachey and the rumours of an income tax:—We do not

An Income Tax.

consider the return of Sir John as a good sign. He has obtained the confidence of the Viceroys who have successively come to this country; but unfortunately the people of this country are so utterly blind that they have not up to this moment been able to discover a single good quality in him. Money is being wasted like water in this Cabul war. According to the Ministers, the total cost will not exceed a hundred and twenty-five lakhs; but no one believes in the assurances of the ministry. This is nothing else but a mere political move. Precisely the same thing was said during the Abyssinian war, although the expenditure was found to exceed even nine millions of pounds. The license tax is being levied and is sucking the life-blood of the poor. Its proceeds are being expended on this war, while the Exchequer is threatened with a deficit. As once before, in the time of Lord Mayo, although the prosecution of all public works has been stopped, still the need of fresh taxation has been felt. Sir John Strachey lacks the power of meeting any extraordinary charge by the reduction of expenditure. He has but one pill in his pharmacopœia, which, like Holloway's pills, he prescribes in all cases; and this *panacea* is the income tax. There is a bird whose presence is regarded by mariners as a sure sign of coming storms. At a time of financial deficit, the advent of Sir John Strachey produces very nearly the same feelings in our minds. Already rumour credits Sir John with a desire to prescribe the old pill. He will, as a matter of course, in the Legislative Council describe the condition of India as one of prosperity, describe it as a country overflowing with corn and wealth. The Viceroy, and the Members too, will tender mutual compliments and bid the country be happy. The people will not, however, find it so easy to be happy. Famine prices prevail, while the hardship suffered by the lower classes knows no bounds. But then the people are not the best judges of their own condition. Our rulers from the heights of Simla, it seems, know better. They have, indeed, in this respect surpassed Mary Antoinette of France, who, when the people were clamouring for bread, wondered why they did not partake of cakes, if the former was not to be had. Be that, as it may, the fear of increased taxation has filled the public mind. If the opinion of the people were consulted, the imposition of an income tax would be a most impolitic measure. Since Government has declared war and the Ministers lack the courage to touch the English Exchequer, India must bear the cost. Government evinced a sad want of foresight by reducing the salt duties, a step by which the Exchequer lost a revenue of sixty lakhs a year; while, with the exception of a few big mahajans, the people have not thereby in the least benefited. The price of salt remains what it was before the reduction of the duty. Let Sir John verify this, if he will, by going into the market. On the plea of benefiting the poor, a revenue of sixty lakhs has thus been sacrificed; but has the plea been made good? We would therefore ask Government to again slightly raise the salt duties, if there be a want of funds; but do not again let loose the income tax assessors upon the country, and produce universal discontent. A little rise in the price of salt would not affect anybody. But what is the good of having salt cheap, when all other articles are dear? We do trust that, for a mere idea, Sir John will not forego the proper means of raising a revenue. There could not be a greater error for a Statesman.

SAHACHARA.

15. In an article headed the "Future of India," the same paper comments on a paper recently contributed to the "Nineteenth Century" by Sir E. Perry. The Government's duty to the country.

writer agrees with the views of the latter, and remarks India is fortunate that the task of her regeneration has been entrusted by Providence in the hands of the English nation. The British Government is in many respects superior to all other civilized Governments. The British constitution is at once noble and impartial, and the British nation is a sincere well-wisher of India. We are convinced that, under its fostering care, the sun of India's prosperity will again rise. The writer then expatiates on the loyalty of the natives, and regrets that Government has not yet learnt to trust them, as witness its efforts to reduce the army of the native princes and the Arms' Act. The great task which, as regards this country, the Government should constantly place before its mind, is to remove its poverty and to improve the condition of its people.

SOM PRAKASH,
January 20th, 1879.

Sir A. Eden on the appointment of
Native Engineers to the Road Cess
Committee.

16. The *Som Prakash*, of the 20th January, is exceedingly gratified to notice the remarks recently made by Sir Ashley Eden, in reviewing the proceedings of Road Cess Committees, on the desirability of appointing native in the place of European Engineers. This is but another instance of the innate sense of justice which is characteristic of Sir Ashley Eden; and the observations recorded by His Honor, if acted upon, will have the effect of inducing economy and allaying much of the discontent which now exists, because Europeans are appointed to superior offices to the exclusion of natives.

SOM PRAKASH.

The Rent Bill.

17. The same paper thus writes on the Bengal Rent Bill:—The Bill to provide the zemindars facilities for the realization of rents has a remarkable resemblance to the Afghan war. After long preparations for this Cabul war, the British heroes enter the field, but there is no enemy to fight with. Just so with this Bill. The measure had been spoken of for a long time past, a draft Bill also had been prepared, but there it lay rotting in the shelves of the Legislative Department. Two, even three, Lieutenant-Governors came and laid down their offices, till at last when it has been brought forward upon the stage, the primary object of the Bill has disappeared. It is now a measure for providing landlords facilities for the collection of rents. But how will this object be attained? At the outset there is no need for creating such facilities on behalf of the zemindar. Every landlord is well aware that in case of undisputed rents, no difficulty is experienced. We do not believe that the landlords desire to have an Act passed for this purpose. As in the Cabul war, the principal object is to check the advance of Russia towards India, although the effect will probably be the conquest of Afghanistan, so in connection with this Bill, it is observable that, although the direct object is to benefit the zemindars, the immediate effect will be to benefit the tenantry. Should the Bill be passed into law, occupancy rights of the tenant will be placed on a secure footing, and yet the tenant will not be able to derive unqualified advantage from the measure. Provision has been made for realizing the rents in four instalments. Now, as we have already pointed out in a previous issue, this arrangement is not at all favourable to the tenant, and could only have been proposed because of the ignorance of the condition of the people in the mofussil which so widely prevails. The editor then repeats what he wrote in the last issue of the paper.

The cost of the Afghan war.

18. The *Behar Bandhu*, of the 22nd January, in writing on the subject of the cost of the Afghan war, remarks that if a new tax be imposed for the purpose of meeting this charge, considerable hardship will result, for the people are already groaning under the burden of taxation. Should the proceeds of the

BEHAR BANDHU,
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license tax again, which it was expressly declared would be set apart as a Famine Insurance Fund, be applied towards this end, where will be the pledge of Government?

LOCAL.

DACCA PRAKASHA,
January 12th, 1879.

Robberies in Dacca.

19. We cull the following from the *Dacca Prakásh*:—Robberies have become frequent in Manikgunj, Munshigunj, and other sub-divisions near Dacca. No less than four were reported last week. The occurrence of petty thefts, too, is common. The energetic District Superintendent of Police, Mr. Reily, is not, however, idle. The increase of crime is believed to be due to high prices.

SANJIVANI,
January 14th, 1879.

A Railway to Mymensingh.

20. The *Sanjivani*, of the 14th January, thus writes about the backward state of trade in Mymensingh and the advantages of a railway to that district. Mymensingh has to depend on Manikgunj and Narayangunj for its supply of oats, wheat, pulses, sugar, molasses, salt, pepper, and all kinds of spices. These are not produced in the district; and there being no facilities of transport, are sold at very high rates. On the other hand, owing to the same cause, tamarind, ginger, mustard, and jute, although abundantly grown in these parts, do not bring adequate profits to the grower. In the hilly parts of the district, cotton is exceedingly cheap, but the cost of transport would be thrice that of the article. At this time of the year, tamarind sells at eight to twelve annas a maund; while at Calcutta the same quantity would cost more than Rs. 5. We know it as a fact that, as regards this article, for want of the means of transport, the people in many places do not take the trouble to gather the fruit; and so with many other articles. There can be no doubt that the construction of a railway will work a revolution in the trade and agriculture of Mymensingh. An increase of activity and industry among the inhabitants will be observable almost at once, and a stimulus will be offered to educated natives, while an advance will be made in the general prosperity of the country.

HINDU RANJIKÁ,
January 15th, 1879.

Govindgunj Post Office.

21. A correspondent of the *Hindu Ranjiká*, of the 15th January, directs the attention of the authorities to the inconvenience which has resulted from the conversion of the Govindgunj Post Office into a Branch Post Office, and the discontinuance of the old short route to Bogra. Letters, which formerly from Bogra took only six hours to reach Govindgunj, now take three days. The frequent changes made in these matters by the postal authorities have of late become really annoying.

BEHAR BANDHU,
January 22nd, 1879.

Roads in Behar and the License Tax.

22. A correspondent of the *Behar Bandhu*, of the 22nd January, complains of the wretched state of the roads in Behar in spite of the existence of municipalities in the province. The members are, however, devoid of all independence, and to please the authorities would agree to any proposal that may be made. Through their eagerness to please the Deputy Magistrate, they gave out the number of persons assessable under the License Tax Act to be very large. The Deputy Magistrate has made over-assessments.

RAJKRISHNA MUKHOPADHYAYA, M.A. & B.L.,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,

The 25th January 1879.